

In the Specification:

Please **replace** the paragraph at **page 3, line 17 to page 4, line 4**, with a replacement paragraph amended as follows:

Figure 1 shows the plasticating screw 1 according to the invention for plasticating a plasticatable polymer material, having several overlaps of a first and second screw channel 4, 5 in the direction of flow 3 of the material from right to left, at least one flight change occurring in the region of the compression zone DZ; further flight changes can be provided upstream and downstream of a pressure-reduction zone DMZ. A polymer is fed on the right-hand side to the plasticating screw in a filling zone FZ of the plasticating screw 1 and is largely plasticated in the adjoining melt zone SZ. In the compression zone DZ adjoining to the left, a gradual enlargement of the screw shaft diameter reduces the channel depth T of the screw channel 2 and hence increases the pressure of the melt. The effect of the flight change according to the invention provided in this region is that the melt is thoroughly mixed in order to heat-soften any as yet not heat-softened polymer constituents, with no sudden pressure increase at the start of this flight change or in the further course thereof. Further flight changes according to the invention are arranged in a mixing zone MZ, in order to achieve even more intensive mixing of the melt. In a pressure-reduction zone DMZ, provision of which is optional, the channel depth is ~~reduced~~, increased, for example, axially parallel, and

hence pressure relief is achieved before the melt is fed  
via a metering zone ZM to the nozzle.

**[AMENDMENT CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE]**